

“What to Do With an Unfriendly Friend”

Ephesians 4:32

August 9, 2009

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Barabas and Sam and Elizabeth and her cousin Martin (visiting from Tanzania) are playing hide and seek in Barabas’s back yard. Sam turned away and closed his eyes and counted to 100 out loud.

Barabas hid behind the garage.



Elizabeth hid under the canoe and Martin hid behind the tree.

Sam finished the numbers in a hurry; “. . . 97 98 99 100 Here I come, ready or not!”

The first place Sam looked was under the canoe but it was dark under there and Elizabeth lay very still and Sam did not notice her. Sam looked around the trees and behind the garbage cans and down the alleyway and he finally found Martin.

Then out of the corner of his eye Sam thought he saw something move under the canoe so he looked again. “Ah ha!” he shouted as he found Elizabeth. “I didn’t even see you the first time!”

“Where’s Barabas?” Elizabeth asked.

“I don’t know, I can’t find him.” answered Sam.

“Maybe he went inside for something.” said Martin.

Barabas stood behind the garage and waited for them to come find him. But they didn't. Sam and Elizabeth and Martin got sidetracked and started playing in the canoe.

"Turn it over and let's pretend we are explorers on a jungle river." said Sam.

So there stood Barabas, in a game of hide and seek and no one was seeking him. He was unfound, feeling very left out. Elizabeth has always been HIS best friend and he was HER best friend. Barabas fell into an old trap of feeling sorry for himself. He was different than the others, too tall, a dumb scar on his face and no mommy or daddy at home, only an uncle. He is not even a giraffe! Poor Barabas has forgotten how loved he is. Sometimes this even happens to us doesn't it.



The longer Barabas watched the three of them playing in the canoe, the worse he felt, until he finally did a stupid thing. He came out from behind the garage and shouted at them.

"Don't you guys know it's hard on a canoe to walk around in it when it is on the hard ground?" He said it with more anger than he meant to, so he cranked up his feelings a notch to match his voice. Barabas stormed away from them over to the other side of the yard.

Elizabeth and Sam and Martin just looked at each other. They certainly had not ignored Barabas on purpose! But when Barabas gets jealous like this, it is kind of hard to feel friendly towards him.

So what do you do when a friend is so . . . 'unfriendable'?

♪ "Be ye kind, one unto another. Tender hearted, forgiving one another. Even as God, for Christ's sake has forgiven you! Toot Toot, Toodle Le Do, Ephesians 4:32 Amen!" ♪

Elizabeth is kind . . . and tenderhearted . . . and forgiving.

“I know! Let’s go play Parcheesi.” she suggested because she knows that Barabas is very good at that game.

And Barabas soaked up her kindness.. “I’m sorry I shouted at you.” And to himself he said “I’m sorry I get so jealous of Sam.”

Be Kind, Tenderhearted and Forgiving to all.

THE END